

What's the impact on our taxes?

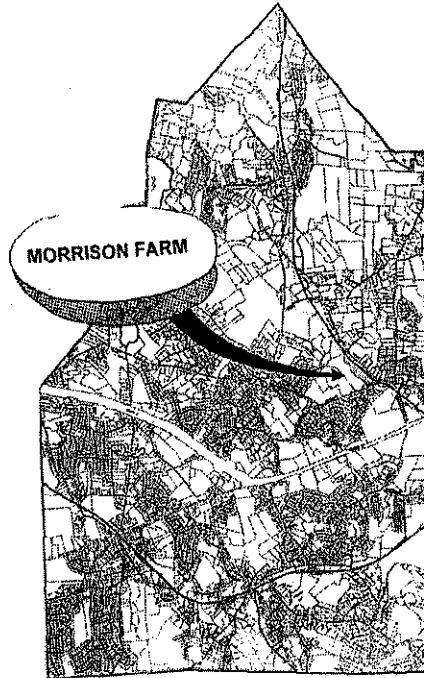
Recent residential development in Acton has been primarily four bedroom homes, and in most cases families having more than one school age child. Even with higher value properties, the annual tax bills at most cover the cost of educating one child. If the land is developed fully, and the recent average of 1.8* school age children, or more, per household prevails, we can expect under recovery of approximately \$4,180 per new house or a total of \$92,000/year, for an average tax increase of \$10 per household in Acton. If the town purchases the land, we will see an annual bond payment that goes from \$144,000 in the first year to \$69,000 in the 20th and last year. This translates to an average tax increase of \$12 per household over the life of the bond. These figures do not attempt to estimate the added burden placed on the municipal infrastructure, for example, added strain on Acton's water supply, additional road surface to maintain, more traffic, and the loss of another farm.

* Recent evaluation of new subdivisions in Acton indicates approximately 1.8 school age children per household.

What happens next?

The Town has an offer to purchase the property. **Article 26** on the warrant for April 7-8 Town Meeting authorizes the Town to borrow for the Morrison Farm acquisition. It will require a 2/3 majority vote. If **Article 26** passes it will be on a ballot requiring the majority of the town to vote for a debt exclusion override.

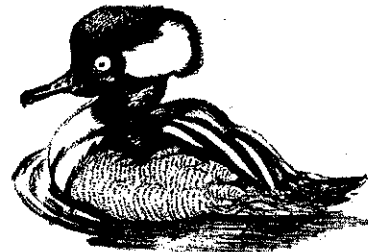
Where is the Morrison Farm?



Whom do I contact?

For more information please call:

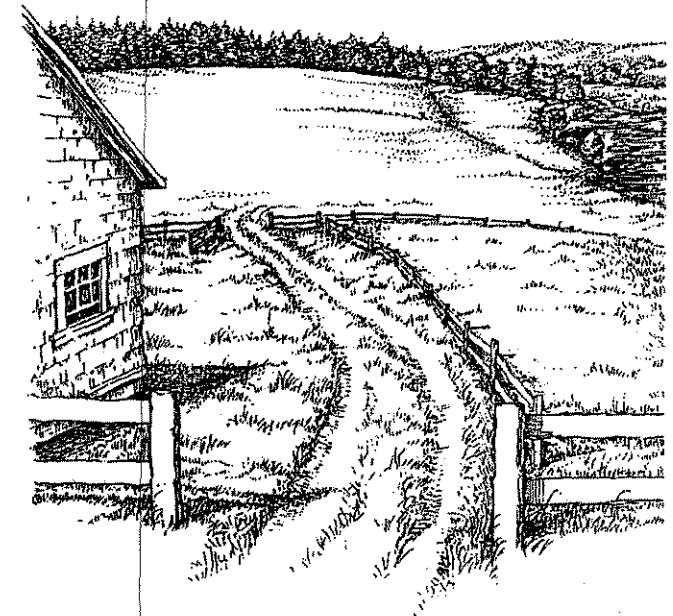
Bill Mullin	Selectman	263 5972
Morene Bodner	Conservation	263 8958
William M. Hill	Conservation	263 1486
Tom Tidman	Natural Resources	264 9631
Allen Warner	Recreation	263 2865
Susan Mitchell-Hardt	Citizens Group	369 9264
Karen O'Neill	Citizens Group	635 0237



Hooded Merganser, Ice House Pond

The Morrison Farm

116 Concord Road, Acton



Article 26: Morrison Land
Spring Town Meeting 1997



What is the Morrison Farm?

A 32 acre farm located at 116 Concord Road that lies between the cemetery soccer field (built on land on loan from the Town's Woodlawn Cemetery) and Ice House Pond. The rear of the property is wooded (about 15 acres) and the open field that can be seen from Concord Road abuts the entire length of Ice House Pond and Nashoba Brook.

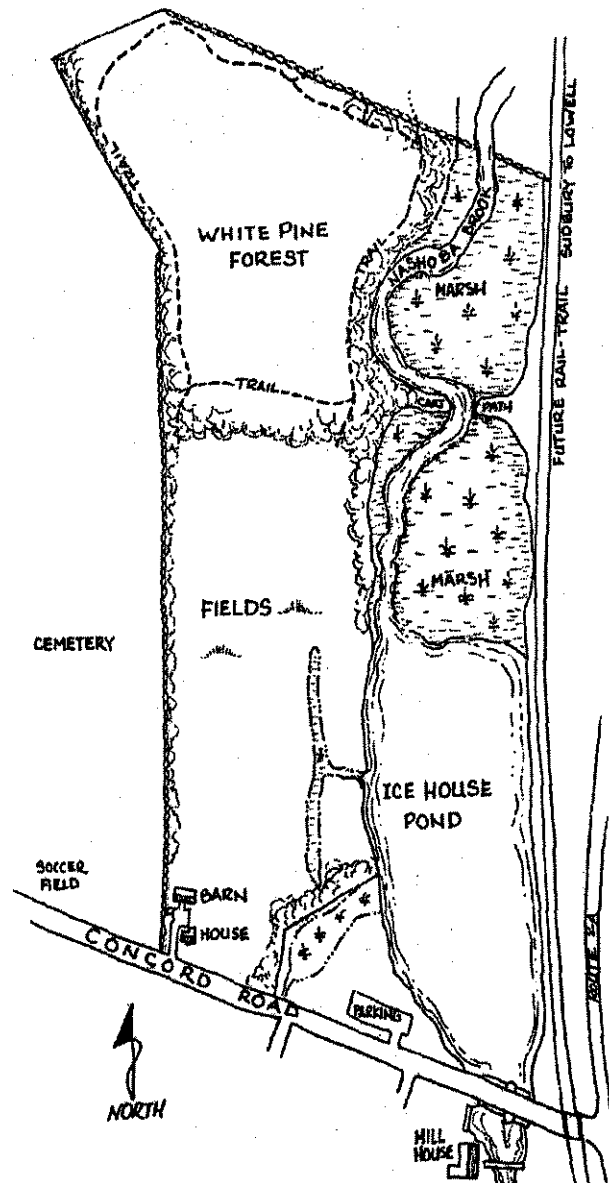
What will it cost; how would we pay?

The Town estimates a cost of nearly \$1.3 Million and is in negotiations with the attorney representing the Morrison Estate over a final price. An agreement would include the right for Mrs. Morrison to continue to occupy the house. The Selectmen are proposing a bond to pay for the land, which would require a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting and a subsequent majority override ballot vote. If the land is purchased, depending on its use, the Town will seek reimbursement from any available State grants.

What if the Town does not buy it?

The land has the potential for a minimum of 22 four bedroom houses, taking into account zoning, wetlands, and river protection act restrictions. Development pressure remains strong, and this farm would be very attractive for a cluster-type residential development.

Morrison Farm Existing Conditions



Why do we want it?

ACTIVE RECREATION POTENTIAL

The Town is in desperate need of additional athletic fields. We have some of the most active recreation programs in the state, and yet have only 20 acres of Town owned land available for sports such as soccer and baseball. Our fields are overused and constantly worn-out. Our programs survive through the heroic efforts of both municipal staff and volunteers who battle turf wear and tear. With this new land, we could build up to two soccer fields and a baseball diamond on the open portion of the land. In addition, we could provide complete access to the shoreline of Ice House Pond and provide access to the future rail-trail on the other side of the pond and brook.

PASSIVE RECREATION POTENTIAL

The property has been designated as a top acquisition priority of the Master Plan and the Open Space and Recreation Plan. The town recently spent \$100,000 to dredge Ice House Pond in order to improve water quality and recreation potential, and the pond is annually stocked with trout. Approximately 1/2 of the land is open fields, sloping down to pond frontage. The remaining acreage is heavily wooded with a beautiful mix of mature softwoods, hardwood and underbrush. The land and pond are an important stopover for migratory waterfowl, Hooded Mergansers (illustrated) are commonly seen on the pond.